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School Lunches Using Farm Surpluses

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A radio conversation between Miss Ruth Van Deman, Bureau of Home Economics, Mr. James B. Hasselman, Office of Marketing and Regulatory Work, and Mr. Wallace Kadderly, Office of Information, broadcast Tuesday, September 17, 1940, in the Department of Agriculture period of the National Farm and Home Hour, by the National Broadcasting Company and a network of 87 associate radio stations.

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WALLACE KADDERLY:

Here we are in Washington. And again it's another fine September day. The kind of a day that makes it pretty hard to keep the mind and the body indoors.

As one of the neighbor boys said to me this morning --- one of the boys who starts to junior high this year --- this is a swell day to play hookey.

Well, that's not exactly news. That's just the way the world has been every September since schools were schools.

ANNOUNCER:

And boys, boys.

KADDERLY:

That's right too. I guess none of us ever live down that playing hockey instinct completely.

But now for our Department of Agriculture feature for the day. We do have some news that will make life healthier and happier for millions of school children, all over this country, before this new school year's over.

I say we have this news. Ruth Van Deman and James B. Hasselman are the ones really to give you the story. They're prepared and waiting here to give the latest word about the school lunch project using farm surpluses. As many of you already know, this is one of the major plans of the Surplus Marketing Administration to aid farmers move their surplus foods into consumer channels.

JAMES B. HASSELMAN:

And what makes this work so important, Wallace, is that it feeds hungry children. I mean children who don't get enough to eat at home --- children who'd otherwise go hungry and become victims of malnutrition, if it weren't for these free school lunches.

RUTH VAN DEMAN:

And on that playing hookey instinct, Wallace, one of the best antidotes for that, you know, is the promise of a good hot meal.

HASSELMAN:

Especially when it may be the one and only good meal a child has in the whole day.

(over)

KADDERLY:

Yes, I'm well aware, Jim, of what you and Ruth are pointing out as to the immediate and the permanent effects of this school lunch program. I realize it's of direct help now to farmers who need to market their produce. And I know it can't help but have a lasting effect on the children, in building better health for them and for their children's children.

HASSELMAN:

You said, Wallace, we were prepared to give the latest word on this school lunch program. You're right. We are. Ruth Van Deman has the latest word there in her hand --- that booklet with the blue cover.

VAN DEMAN:

Yes, Wallace, this is your notification copy. --- Allow me to present you --- Mr. Kadderly.

KADDERLY:

"School Lunches Using Farm Surpluses" --- that's a good title. And a mighty nice looking bulletin if I may be allowed to say so.

HASSELMAN:

It's not just the title and the cover. It's what's inside that counts.

VAN DEMAN:

38 menus and 77 recipes, to be exact --- recipes worked out in quantities for 12, 25, and 50 servings. ---- Yes, Mrs. Carpenter and Mrs. Yeatman worked hard on these school lunch menus and recipes.

HASSELMAN:

And it's a swell job. These menus and recipes are essential to getting this school lunch project converted into appetizing, nourishing food, on the table, where the youngsters can get at it.

VAN DEMAN:

The final step of course is the actual cooking and serving of the food.

HASSELMAN:

And that, like all the other aspects of this program, depends on good team work.

In fact, I can't stress the cooperative nature of this school lunch project too strongly. It's cooperative from start to finish.

VAN DEMAN:

The Federal Government, that is the Surplus Marketing Administration, starts the ball rolling by making available certain food supplies.

HASSELMAN:

And those food supplies are distributed through State and local welfare agencies, to local communities that apply. The final responsibility rests on the local community groups, sponsoring the lunch program.

VAN DEMAN:

I'm proud to salute the Parent-Teacher Association as one of the leaders.

HASSELMAN:

Yes, the P.T.A., the Rotary and Kiwanis Clubs, --- any number of civic, social, and religious groups are helping to put the job over.

Last year three million children from underprivileged families had the benefit of these school lunches. Every State in the Union, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, --- yes, the District of Columbia, --- took part. The three million children ate nearly a hundred million pounds of surplus foods in these school lunches.

VAN DEMAN:

And this year you have hopes of running the total to six million children.

KADDERLY:

We certainly have the food to do it in this country. With our foreign export markets shut off, we're piling up bigger surpluses than ever of certain foods here at home.

HASSELMAN:

Yes, but there's another reason behind this school lunch project even more fundamental to our national welfare than marketing food. -----

VAN DEMAN:

Well-nourished children. --- I'm going to steal the words from you, Mr. Hasselman.

HASSELMAN:

That's not stealing, Miss Van Deman. It's from studies of child nutrition and American family diets, such as the Bureau of Home Economics is making, that we've learned about undernourishment in this country.

And when young men come up for examination for service in the Army and the Navy there's no escaping the result of some of these lacks in diet. They show up in poor teeth, flat feet, underweight, and dozens of other serious ways.

KADDERLY:

In that sense this school lunch program ties in with our whole big plan of preparedness for national defense.

HASSELMAN:

Certainly. Health defense is a necessary part of national defense.

VAN DEMAN:

And a well-balanced diet is a necessary part of health defense, to round the circle another way.

Wallace, I see you're taking a look-see through the new bulletin. Have you noticed the list of the foods for a well-rounded school lunch?

KADDERLY:

This one here on page one?

VAN DEMAN:

Um-hum. Just run through that, if you don't mind.

KADDERLY:

Milk. I guess that always heads the list on a school lunch scheme.

VAN DEMAN:

Always. Half a pint for each child to drink, and some more to use in cooking.

KADDERLY:

After milk comes whole-grain cereal. -----

VAN DEMAN:

Synonymous with whole-grain bread.

KADDERLY:

Yes, they're given side by side. ----- Then, vegetable or fruit.

VAN DEMAN:

Or both, if you want to run the vitamin count way up.

KADDERLY:

Then, egg, lean meat, fish, or cheese -----

VAN DEMAN:

The protein foods they are --- body builders. -----

KADDERLY:

And butter or some other fat. And last, sweets. -----

VAN DEMAN:

Calories, for dessert and energy. --- That's the general plan for the well-rounded lunch. And that's the plan Mrs. Carpenter and Mrs. Yeatman worked into the 38 menus. Some are for the school with good cooking facilities. Some for the one-dish type of lunch, where table and stove space are at a premium.

HASSELMAN:

And the list of available surplus foods. That checks fairly closely with the foods called for in the menus. --- That is, taking the school year clear through. Fruits and vegetables come and go most, according to season.

KADDERLY:

There's one question I want to get clear, Jim, about the supplies for these lunch projects. How does a school or a community go about getting these surplus foods?

HASSELMAN:

Makes application through the State and local welfare agencies. Any school, located in a neighborhood where the children come from underprivileged families, can be certified.

KADDERLY:

Suppose a school doesn't know what agency --- State or local --- to get in touch with.

HASSELMAN:

In that case, they'd better write directly to us----to the Surplus Marketing Administration here in the Department of Agriculture in Washington,

KADDERLY:

You'll help them to make the proper local arrangements.

HASSELMAN:

Certainly.

KADDERLY:

And I am sure, Ruth, that your Bureau, the Bureau of Home Economics, will gladly send any school, or the chairman of any school lunch committee, a copy of this blue booklet of menus and recipes for "School Lunches Using Farm Surpluses."

VAN DEMAN:

Very gladly.

KADDERLY:

Well, Farm and Home friends, that's a definite offer, to any of you who are lending a hand in this job of providing children with free school lunches. If you want menus and school-size recipes to guide you, just drop a card to the Bureau of Home Economics, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C. Ask for the new school lunch bulletin, if you don't remember the full title.

VAN DEMAN:

We might nickname it the school lunch bluebook.

KADDERLY:

That would be very suitable---a bluebook for school lunch directors, with recipes for preparing foods in large quantities.

